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Loosened rules loom for media

Loosened rules 'GLOOM'
For the people! One voice,
no choice. One voice, one side.

Just like FERC., the FCC does not
work for the people - as laws state
it should. How much payola did Powell (jr.) & gang receive?

✓ #136

10: Federal Communications
Commission

445 12th St. SW
Washington, D.C.
20554



531.3

FCC poised to lift the ban on cross-ownership

By Michael Liedtke
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN FRANCISCO — The loosening of rules on how many newspapers and broadcast stations a company can own is being happily awaited by some media chains, while critics fear the result will be fewer public voices.

The changes, expected to pass 3-2 in a Federal Communications Commission vote Monday, will end a 28-year ban on ownership of newspapers and broadcast stations — television or radio — in the same market. The prohibition was intended to preserve a variety of viewpoints.

Cross-ownership has been barred in all but a few cities, including Chicago, Atlanta and Milwaukee, where it existed before the ban.

The FCC also is expected to let companies build their portfolio of TV stations up to a new limit of 45 percent of the total U.S. market. The limit is now 35 percent.

The vision of fewer owners controlling more communication channels deeply troubles some people. They predict even more cutbacks in already-shrinking newsrooms, resulting in more superficial, homogeneous coverage that ignores crucial community issues.

"If the FCC does this, we will have started down the path to the end of democracy," said *Seattle Times* publisher Frank Blethen.

Supporters of the changes envision more nimble and profitable businesses, pooling the resources of newspapers and broadcasters to deliver better coverage.

"It gives you a much bigger megaphone to talk through," said William Dean Singleton,

Media metamorphosis

The Federal Communications Commission will vote on Monday to modify its regulations on media ownership. Some of the largest media companies that will be affected by these changes already own key communication outlets.

Top television broadcasters

Company	Number of stations	Percentage of household reach
Viacom Inc.	39	38.8%
News Corp.	35	37.8%
General Electric Co.	14	33.6%
Paxon Communications Corp.	65	30.9%
Tribune Co.	26	30.0%
Walt Disney Co.	10	23.6%

Top radio broadcasters

Company	Number of stations	2001 revenue (in millions)
Clear Channel Communications Inc.	1,238	\$3,265.4
Viacom Inc. (Infinity)	183	\$2,081.1
Cox Enterprises Inc.	79	\$431.4
Entercom Communications Corp.	103	\$407.9
Walt Disney Co.	59	\$403.9

Newspaper companies

Company	Number of newspapers	Circulation* (in millions)
Gannett Co.	100	7.7
Knight Ridder	31	5.1
Tribune Co.	12	5.1
New York Times Co.	19	3.2
Hearst Corp.	12	2.4

*Largest reported circulation

SOURCES: The companies; The Center for Public Integrity; Audit Bureau of Circulations; BIA Financial Network; Nielsen Media Research

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president of Denver-based MediaNews Group, a newspaper publisher considering expansion into TV.

With the rise of cable TV and the Internet, top media companies persuaded the FCC's three Republicans that the restrictions are no longer

needed. The commission's two Democrats are not convinced.

Most people still turn to TV stations or newspapers for local news. Not all, however, depend on both sources. Some media companies want to

SEE Media, C4

Ban lifted! - we are all
now on the road to
DE 'MOCK' CRACY!